



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Luke Sermon Series
Supports Session 9: Willing
Sermon Title: "The Cross Life"
Passage: Luke 22:39-46

Connection to Luke 22

Verses 39-46 shine the light on Jesus' final recorded prayer before His trial and subsequent death. It is clear from Jesus' prayer that He had embraced the cross even before He was nailed to it, and it perfectly illustrates what it means to take up our cross.

Introduction/Opening

The cross of Jesus is the supreme example of a paradox. As the old hymn states, it is the emblem of suffering and shame, yet at the same time it is the pathway to exaltation (Phil. 2:8-9). The cross is foolishness to the world, yet it is God's wisdom (1 Cor. 1:22-24). The cross is a symbol of weakness, but it is also a sign of the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18). The cross is an instrument of death, but at the same time, it is the life Christ-followers are to live. Jesus was clear about this in Luke 9:23 when He said, "Then he said to them all, "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me." In Jesus' final recorded prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, even before He was nailed to the cross, He demonstrated what the cross life of a believer is to be.

Outline

1. The cross life is a selfless life (vv. 40,46).
 - a. If there was ever a time in His life for Jesus to think about Himself, those moments shortly before His arrest would be the time. He was about to be betrayed by one of His own, face an illegal set of trials, be beaten and ridiculed, and experience the excruciating pain of crucifixion.
 - b. His concern, however, was not for Himself, but for others. In verses 40 and 46 He commanded His disciples to pray for themselves that they might not enter into temptation. Instead of a concern for Himself, Jesus was concerned that His followers might fall into a temptation that would shipwreck their faith.
 - c. Selflessness was a hallmark of Jesus' character. Throughout His earthly ministry, He put the needs of others before His own need. His concern for others and ministry to them was so consuming that He often went without food to meet their needs (Mark 3:20; 6:31).
 - d. Selflessness is also to be the hallmark of Jesus' followers. In Philippians 2, Paul held up the selflessness of Jesus as the character trait that caused Him to go to the cross and he said, in verse 5, that Christ-followers should make the attitude of Jesus their own.

2. The cross life is a surrendered life (vv. 41-42).
- a. No doubt, having grown up in a land under Roman occupation, Jesus had seen a crucifixion before. He was aware of the agony associated with this cruel execution.
 - b. Jesus' prayer in verse 42, "Father, if You are willing, take this cup away from Me ... ," explicitly demonstrates the humanity of Jesus. He did not want to experience the pain and agony of crucifixion!¹
 - c. And yet, that same prayer in verse 42 demonstrated Jesus' complete surrender to the Father. The phrase, "if you are willing" expressed Jesus' affirmation of the complete sovereignty of God and His prayer, "nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done," expressed His surrender to God's sovereign will.
 - d. For the follower of Jesus, the call to carry our cross is a call to surrender to God's sovereign will. It means to abandon our desires and embrace His. It means to forsake our goals and pursue His. It means to turn our backs on our kingdom and seek His.

Conclusion

For many today, the cross is a trinket that dangles from a chain around their necks, gold bobs that hang from the ears, or beautiful ornaments that adorn church buildings. Jesus, however, was clear that the cross was His way of life and the way of life for His followers. All who claim to be in Him are obligated to walk as He walked (1 John 2:6).

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¹ In all four Gospels, "cup," when used in reference to the passion of Jesus, speaks of His agony and death on the cross.